



PHYSICS AND ISLAM

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ABSTRACT

What we know today about the universe is one of the greatest mysteries of the science. Its vastness makes it impossible to explore it thoroughly. The universe that we know and understand today is only the 5% of entire picture and rest 95% is still hidden. The methodology to understand the universe is twofold. The first method is science and other method is religion. Science is based on theories, observation and experiments where as religion is based on faith. Islam compliments the science more. In case of physics, the Quran explains the expansion of universe and Big Bang theory, formation of day and night amongst other facts. People believed that sun orbited the earth and sky was held up by brick pillars at the corner of flat earth. These were not scientifically proven or discovered until the previous century, nearly 1400 years after the Quran was revealed. There are scientific and historical facts in the Quran which were unknown to the people at that time have been discovered now. Allah gives us intelligence so that we could use it to recognize His existence and to follow his guidelines.

KEY WORDS: Big Bang, expansion of universe, The Quran, Mystery, Theories, Revelation, Observation, Existence.

INTRODUCTION:

Ever since the dawn of mankind we have sought to understand nature and our place in it. In the quest for our purpose many people have turned to the religion. Most of the religions are based on the books claimed by their followers to be divinely inspired without any proofs. Islam is different because it is based upon reasons and proofs. There are clear signs that book of Islam- the Holy Quran is the word of God. There are many reasons that support this claim. There are scientific and historical facts in the Quran which were unknown to the people at that time have been discovered recently. Before we move on to the concept of physics found in Quran, let us have a concept of God in Islam. In Islam God is nothing like a human being or like anything that we can imagine. The concept of god is summarised in the Quran.

"He is Allah, the One God, The absolute, He does not give birth nor He is born and there is nothing like Him" (Quran 112: 1-4).

Allah gives us intelligence so that we could use it to recognize His existence and to follow his guidelines. When we reflect upon the nature of our world, we see order everywhere from water cycle to the rotation of earth around the sun. Commenting upon the order form in the universe the physicist Stephen Hawking explains the overwhelming impressions, "the more we discover about the universe, the more we find that it is governed by rational laws." (Hawking, 1996). Since the universe has order and governed by the laws of science, we should question how this order came about. When we see the level of organization in the universe, it would be rational to believe that it must have an organizer and this organizer is best explained as God. There are many verses in the Quran concerned with the natural phenomenon. It is impossible to explain their presence in human terms, given the state of knowledge at the time the Quran was revealed. The Quran deals with all subjects that concern us as human being and its basic theme is the relationship between God and His creatures. In Islam there is no conflict between faith in God and modern scientific knowledge. The Quran itself revealed 14 centuries ago, contains many scientific facts that are supported by modern findings. The Quran contains many scientifically accurate statements. Amongst them few are given:

- *"Do not the unbelievers that heavens and were joined together, then we split them apart?" (Quran 21:30)*
- *"It is he who created the night and day, and the sun and the moon. All (the celestial bodies) swim along, each in its rounded course" (Quran 21:33).*
- *"We sent down iron with its great inherent strength and its many benefits for human kind" (Quran 57: 25)*
- *"It is I Who has built the universe with power and keep expanding it." (Quran 51:47)*
- *"The sun and moon follow courses exactly computed" (Quran 55:5)*
- *"Do not you see that Allah merges Night into Day and He merges Day into Night; that He has subjected the sun and the moon (to His law), each running its course for a term appointed; and that Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do? (Quran 31:29)".*

- *"And a Sign for them is the Night: We withdraw there from the Day, and behold they are plunged in darkness" (Quran 36:37)*

The Quran was revealed to Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) in the seventh century. Science at that time was primitive and there was no telescope, microscope or anything close to the technology at that time which we have today.

DISCUSSION:

We will discuss here few facts which are revealed in The Quran and will compare them with the modern science. It is proved that Physics and Islam are not at odd ends rather they complement each other. The Quran unfolds the secrets of universe. What Physics is saying today is already discussed in The Quran. The following facts have been undertaken for discussion.

The Quran Describes Night and Day:

For many centuries, people believed that earth is flat with no idea that earth is spherical. But holly Qur'an told us about this cosmic reality when God described this phenomenon by using the word (roll).

Because of the continuous movement of earth and if the sun is not existed to ensure needed light for the day also without the spherical shape of earth, "night and day rotation phenomenon "Wouldn't happen. Night and day moves with the same speed and they swim around earth due to earth rotation around itself, God says: *"It is he who created the night and day, and the sun and the moon. All (the celestial bodies) swim along, each in its rounded course" (Quran 21:33).*, as sun has its rounded course and moon has its rounded course, also there is a continuous and organized move for day and night as a proof that earth is spherical. Night and day overlaps along a circle surrounds earth in an area where sun set happens on one side and sun rise happens on the other side. God says: *"do not you see that Allah merges Night into Day and He merges Day into Night; that He has subjected the sun and the moon (to His law), each running its course for a term appointed; and that Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do?" (Quran 31:29).* The day layer is very thin as human skin. God says : *"And a Sign for them is the Night: We withdraw there from the Day, and behold they are plunged in darkness" (Quran 37).* This layer covers the luminous side of earth. The height of this layer is no more than 100 kilometres but diameter of earth is about 12500 kilometres, so day layer is less than 1% of diameter of earth.

Finally, we can say that all verses which describe night and day are compiled with the modern science with no contradiction between Qur'an and facts of physics. It is an indication that this book (Qur'an) is sincere, miraculous and word of Almighty Allah.

Expansion of universe:

At a time when a astronomy was primitive, the expansion of universe was described in Holy Quran. Allah says *"It is I Who has built the universe with power and keep expanding it." (Quran 51:47).*

The fact that universe is expanding was discovered in the last century. The physicist Stephen Hawking in his book "A brief history of time" writes "the discovery that universe is expanding was one of the great revolution of 20th century. The concept of expansion of universe was given by Hubble. In 1929, a scientist named Hubble made a startling discovery. He noticed that light coming from other galaxies was red shifted. This means that the frequency observed by Hubble was less

than the actually frequency with which the light was being emitted from the galaxy. According to the Doppler Effect, which is the observed vs. the actual frequency of a wave emitted from a source moving relative to a person (like a siren on an ambulance approaching and then going far), it meant that the galaxy was moving away from away from each other, consequently expanding the universe in size. This discovery was made possible through the use of powerful telescopes and other equipment. This equipment was not present during time the Quran was revealed in the 7th century.

Big Bang Theory:

Big Bang Theory remained the biggest controversy in science vs. religious debate. This theory is the direct consequence of expansion of the universe. If the universe is expanding as we know it, then the moment you turn back, it keeps contracting till the universe was just a single point. In physics that point is called as singularity which is an object of high density. Theory states that whole universe came from this point when it exploded (Big Bang) and splits into numerous pieces. The pieces then formed all the stars and planets etc. Many religious people do not believe in this theory because they say it contradicts the fact that God created the universe and also science has not been able to determine where exactly the singularity came from. Islam brings these two together. Yes, God created the universe but He did through a big bang. The Quran says *"the heaven and earth were joint entity, and then we split them apart?"* (Quran 21:30).

Here 'joint entity' refers to singularity and separation refers to Big Bang. This is again a proof of Quran divinity.

Sun's Orbit:

In 1512, the astronomer Nicholas Copernicus put forward his theory that "sun is motionless at the centre of solar system and planets revolve around it". This belief was widespread among the astronomers till 20th century. It is now well established scientific fact that sun is not stationery but moving in an orbit around the centre of our Milky Way galaxy. The Holy Quran mentions the orbit of sun and says, *"It is he who created the night and day, and the sun and the moon. All (the celestial bodies) swim along, each in its rounded course"* (Quran 21:33).

Iron:

Iron is no natural to earth. It came down to earth from outer space. Physicists have billions of years ago that earth was stuck by the meteorites. These meteorites were carrying iron from distant stars which were exploded. The Quran says following line on the origin of iron,

"We sent down iron with its great inherent strength and its many benefits for human kind" (Quran 57: 25)

CONCLUSION:

We can conclude the following facts from the scientific facts and verses of Holy Quran.

1. The verses about astronomy in The Quran serve as a sign of Quran's authenticity as a book revealed by all knowing creator.
2. The verses about astronomy serve as inspiration for those who ponder upon them. Islam is not the religion that condemns physics and worldly knowledge rather it encourages the mankind to go deep into these topics.
3. The Quran gives small doses of information about the universe and leaves the rest for human to discover on their own.
4. The Quran is a source of motivation to unlock the secrets of the universe and also to impart curiosity in a man.
5. For many centuries, people believed that earth is flat with no idea that earth is spherical. But holly Qur'an told us about this cosmic reality when God described this phenomenon by using the word (roll) in the formation of Day and Night. All the verses regarding the formation of day and night in the Quran provide a proof that earth is spherical.
6. Physics and Islam are not at odd ends rather they complement each other.

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